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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 000473

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/CE AND EUR/RPM

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [PGOV](#) [RO](#)

SUBJECT: ROMANIAN CANDIDATE FOR NATO STRATEGIC CONCEPT
EXPERTS

Classified By: Charge d'affaires, a.i. Jeri Guthrie-Corn; Reasons 1.4(b)
) and (d).

¶1. (SBU) MFA Director General Calin Stoica, accompanied by Security Policy (NATO) Minister Counselor Dan Grigorescu, met with Charge and POLMILOFF on July 7 to convey the GOR's support for Iulian Chifu to be a candidate for the NATO Secretary General's Panel of Experts to consult on the development of a new NATO Strategic Concept. Stoica emphasized Chifu's qualifications as a security expert, his youth (he is 41 years old), and his solid standing among international civil society organizations. Stoica furthermore highlighted Chifu's experience and expertise in the Caucasus, Black Sea area, and the full range of European security issues. Recognizing that the decision is ultimately the incoming Secretary General's call, Stoica nonetheless hoped that consultations with close allies who might be willing to put in a good word for Romania's candidate would help Chifu's chances.

¶2. (C) Comment: Chifu is a close contact of this Mission. He is the Director of the Conflict Prevention and Early Warning Center in Bucharest and in that capacity has organized multiple conferences on European security issues including one on NATO and ESDP last winter, and most recently one on NATO Capabilities and Budgeting for European Defense: Territorial versus Expeditionary Forces. Chifu has an impressive number of academic achievements and has authored dozens of "white papers" for the Ministry of National Defense and the Foreign Ministry on a wide range of European Security issues from Transnistria to Consequence Management issues (CV emailed to EUR/CE).

¶3. (C) (Comment Cont.) What Stoica did not say was that President Basescu personally hand-picked Chifu to be Romania's candidate. Basescu trusts Chifu to represent Romania's interests without distortion. Chifu is also seen as an extremely competent expert empowered directly by Cotroceni Palace who would report faithfully to the President, according to MFA State Secretary Bogdan Aurescu. Aurescu added that Chifu's experience and standing are such that he is above reproach from any of the three major parties in Romania, an invaluable attribute during a presidential election year. Mission concurs that Chifu should be fully considered as a viable and professional representative of not only Romania's but also more broadly of Eastern European regional interests. End Comment.
GUTHRIE-CORN